

Remarks

Election of Species

In its prior response, the Applicant provisionally withdrew Claims 2-9 and 11-19 in the event that no generic claim was found to be held allowable. The Examiner noted that the Applicant did not identify a species by the drawing figures for further prosecution. Applicant hereby elects the species depicted in Figures 1-8 for further prosecution.

Objections to the Specification

Applicant has amended the specification to remove the term/phrase "fingers/studs" and "studs/fingers" with the term "stud". The objection should be reversed.

The Rejection of Claims 1, 20 and 22 under 35 USC §112

The Examiner rejected the above-identified claims as being indefinite for reciting "said elastic band" as opposed to "said at least one elastic band" in Claim 1 and "fingers/studs" in Claim 21 and other non elected claims. Applicant has amended Claim 1 to recite "said at least one elastic band" and has amended Claim 21 and other non elected claims to recite "studs" as opposed to "fingers/studs".

With regard to the Examiner's assertion that the phrase "arranged to mate therewith" of Claim 22 was ungrammatical, the claim containing such language is Claim 21, not Claim 22. Applicant has, thus, amended Claim 21 to recite "such that said studs mate with said receptacles" as opposed to "operatively arranged for mate therewith."

The rejection should be reversed.

The Rejection of Claims 1, 20 and 23 under 35 USC §102

Applicant has amended independent Claims 1 and 23 to recite that the channel is disposed proximate the longitudinal sides of the housing. Brouwer does not disclose a similar configuration. On the contrary, Brouwer discloses a pair of notches (See Col. 3, lines 2-5) disposed in the terminal ends of a tube structure. A notch is a V-shaped cut whereas a channel is

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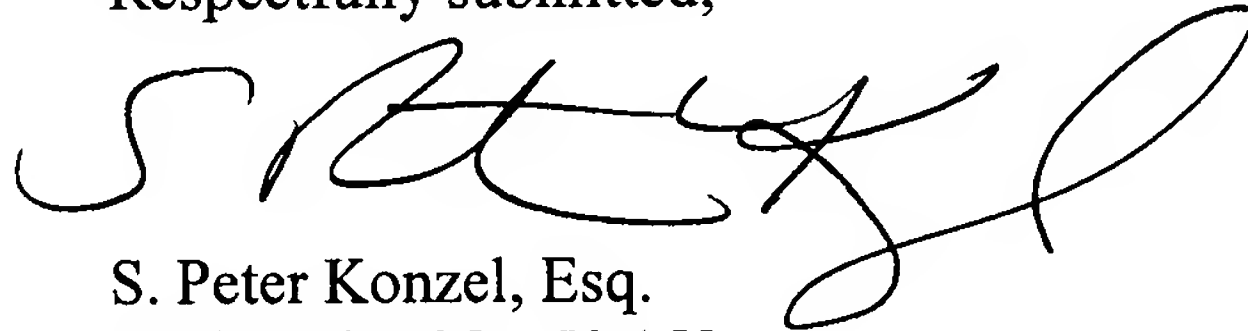
an elongate groove, trench or the like. Additionally, Brouwer does not disclose a pair of channels disposed proximate the longitudinal sides of the housing, but rather at the terminal ends.

The rejection should be reversed.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is now in condition for examination on the merits, which action is courteously requested. The Examiner is invited and encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney of record if such contact will facilitate an efficient examination and allowance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,



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